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Glimpses of the Northland



By
Arthur Santmier
Missionary Teacher

Price, twenty-five cents

Sketches of Life Among the Cree and Salteaux Indians





IN LIGHT HUNTING DRESS.

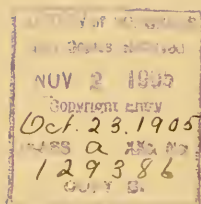
GLIMPSES OF THE NORTHLAND

SKETCHES OF LIFE AMONG THE
CREE AND SALTEAUX INDIANS

—BY—

ARTHUR SANTMIER
MISSIONARY TEACHER.

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PREFACE.

This booklet was prepared at the request of friends, and is intended to precede a larger volume to be published in the near future.

The illustrations are from photographs taken by myself and have been selected somewhat at random from a large collection.

A. S.

Chicago, October 12, 1905.

I.

THE NORTHLAND.

The great Northern wilderness has charms that belong to no other land. With its illimitable wastes of snow and ice and its vast stretches of evergreen forests, sprinkled with birch trees and poplars; with the impressive stillness brooding over the land, and with its glorious display of *Aurora Borealis*, it stands preeminently the land of lonely mystery.

The simple-hearted Indians roaming the interior of this country have peculiar, native ideas of deity. They see the Great Spirit in the flowers and trees, and hear his voice in the loud peal of thunder that follows the lightning's flash, and in the sighing of the night wind. The Red Man is intensely religious and his religion is full of superstition.

The line of the Canadian Pacific Railroad forms a frontier for many hundreds of miles. Northward all is wilderness, and only within a short time has the tide of colonization swept in that direction. For many years Lake Winnipeg has been the principal gateway to the land of mystery, known commercially as "the fur country." Down the four hundred miles' expanse of this mighty lake the supplies for many of the Northern posts are carried on large, well-appointed lake steamers. In former years the cumbersome York boats afforded the only means for transporting supplies.

At different points on the lake fishing stations

have been established, and thousands of boxes of white-fish, pickerel and sturgeon are annually sent to Eastern markets. In winter this mighty lake lies buried beneath a mantle of ice and snow, while terrific storms sweep over its glittering surface.

Twenty-five miles from the foot of the lake in a northeasterly direction is Norway House, the distributing point for the great Hudson's Bay Company, and the center for the missionary enterprise of the Methodist church among the Cree and Saulteaux Indians. Here the weary missionaries come in from the distant stations, seamed and scarred by storms, browned by exposure and often weak from suffering and hunger. Here all the supplies for the various mission stations are reshipped by canoe or dog-train.

The buildings of the Hudson's Bay Company form quite a village by themselves, and many bear marks of battles in the old and troublesome days of rebellion. Government agency buildings are being erected, a Post-Office has been established recently, and a prosperous Indian boarding school, and a large church and parsonage give evidence of the presence and labors of the missionary.

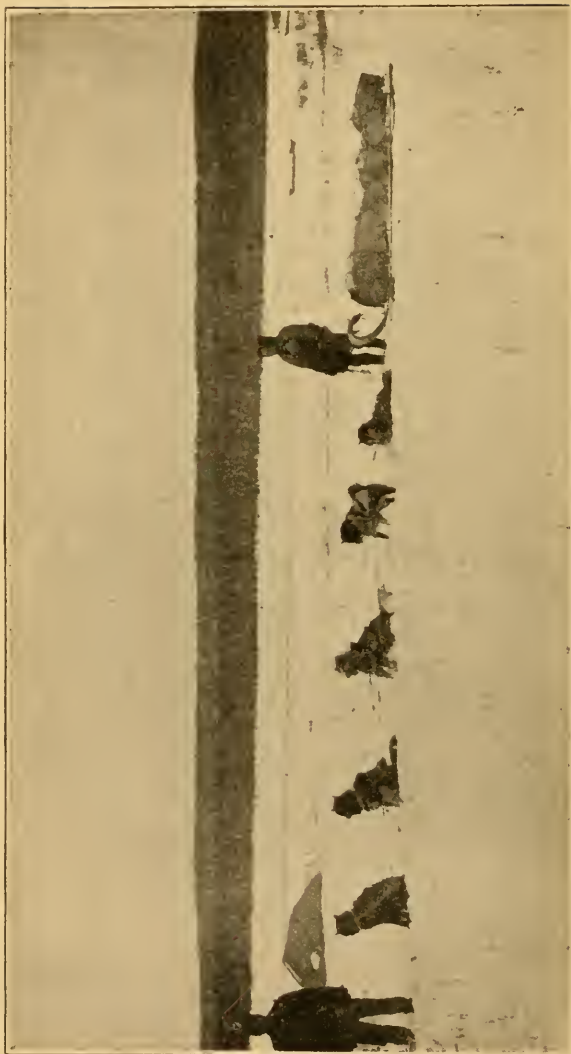
Southeast and east of Norway House are the mission stations of Island Lake, Oxford House and God's Lake, in distance from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty miles, reached by difficult canoe routes. Northward from Norway House, down the mighty Nelson River, are Cross Lake and Nelson House, both prosperous mission stations. On Lake Winnipeg, Black River, Poplar River, Fisher River, Beren's River and other points are sta-

tions manned by Methodist missionaries. This entire district, including a group of stations far out on the Saskatchewan River in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, is under the supervision of the district chairman, Rev. T. Ferrier, who is also the superintendent of the Indian Industrial School at Brandon, Manitoba.

For three months I was stationed at Cross Lake on the Nelson River as teacher of the Reservation School, and at Oxford House and God's Lake for one year as missionary teacher. During this time I traveled extensively, and observed closely and will relate some of my experiences.

DOWN LAKE WINNIPEG IN WINTER.

It was in the stormy month of March that I received my introduction to the Northland. A howling blizzard had swept over Lake Winnipeg and all roads or trails were hidden from sight. Trains on the Canadian Pacific and Canadian Northern Railroads were snowbound at different points, and for several days no trains left the station at Winnipeg. Reaching Selkirk by first train after the blizzard, I found all communication with the North stopped. Trains usually running thirty miles farther to Winnipeg Beach on the lake were cancelled, and all north of Selkirk was left in snowy mystery. After considerable inquiry I found that the teams that hauled fish from Beren's river, a point one hundred and sixty miles down the lake, had been stopped for the season, and the only way to reach the North was by private horse and dog-team.



THE AUTHOR DRIVING AN ESKIMO TEAM.

At this juncture I fortunately met Mr. Ewing of the Ewing and Fryer Fish Company, a man thoroughly conversant with methods of traveling in the North. As this gentleman was about to go far down the Nelson River past my post of duty, I gladly accepted an invitation to travel with him. Late on Monday evening we started for Lake Winnipeg. For miles the road led us through dreary snow-drifts and then for miles upon the frozen surface of the Red River of the North. We camped late at night in the log cabin of a half-breed settler, and in the small front room we spread our rabbit robes upon the floor and went to sleep along with fifteen others—seventeen in one room. The next day, early, we reached the lake, and engaging a team of wiry, western horses, started on our long trip. We were obliged to carry sufficient horse feed to last during the entire trip.

Our way for two or three days led us past Icelandic settlements along beaten roads, and then we crossed the wide Washow peninsula and reached Fisher River and Bay, the first Methodist mission on the west side of the lake. We startled a number of moose while crossing this forty mile strip of wilderness, and several rabbits and partridges fell victims to my revolver.

We left Fisher Bay in a terrific blizzard and boldly launched out on the frozen expanse of Lake Winnipeg and faced the storm. The sleet cut our faces and benumbed our bodies, and even the poor horses could scarcely stand before the gale, and we had difficulty in keeping their heads to the north. At one point we found a sleigh loaded with boxes of

frozen fish, fast in an ice crack. The driver, being unable to extricate his load, had been obliged to leave it. We ran our teams at full speed, and jumped the crack safely. We crossed a number of these dangerous cracks in this way. After severe battling with storms, and considerable effort to find the trail, we finally reached Beren's River, the end of our one hundred and sixty mile ride behind horses. Besides being partially snow-blind, my face was badly scarred and covered with deep cracks, filled with coagulated blood. My forehead and cheeks were badly blistered, and in many ways the hardships of the trip were visible. To travel in the North is to court hardship and suffering.

At Beren's River I met Mrs. McLachlan, the wife of a missionary among the Cree and Salteaux Indians for many years. Her daughter, Miss Madeline McLachlan, a young lady of about nineteen years, was born in the North, and in addition to driving dogs and paddling a canoe, she plays the piano nicely. After a short rest at this point Mr. Ewing started on expecting me to follow in an hour or two, but unfortunately I was unable to find dogs and so was delayed for several days longer.

After considerable parley I secured a young Indian by the name of Francis, and a team of five fairly good dogs. I had a load of but two hundred pounds, and so expected to ride, but the way proved long, the dogs slow, and the weather cold; so I ran nearly all the way, a distance of about one hundred and twenty miles, finishing in two and one-half days.

A NARROW ESCAPE.

The first night of this journey I met with an experience which nearly terminated my labors ere they had begun. We chose for our camp a mossy place at the base of an uprooted tree, and after our customary meal of roast rabbit, bannock and strong tea. I conducted our evening devotions and we prepared to turn in. For the Indian this was comparatively an easy thing, but to me it presented a danger for which I was entirely unprepared. Mr. Ewing was several days in advance with the bedding and I had but one thin blanket and the night was clear and cold.

Few realize the intense cold of a night in the far North. It comes down silently, without warning, and embraces in its icy folds all that has life, and gradually, almost imperceptibly, destroys that life, rendering the Northland a land of danger and often of suffering and of death.

Wrapping myself in my blanket I lay down, but not to sleep, for, as the fire gradually went down the mercury dropped, and I soon felt that I was freezing. After two or three hours without changing my position, I became alarmed and essayed to rise, when I found, to my horror, that I could not move a muscle. In terror I endeavored to call my guide, but my tongue would not obey. For the space of two or three minutes I endured untold agony. At last by a violent effort I succeeded in breaking the spell, and was able to move one limb; then the blood started to circulate, and with every nerve tingling, and with teeth chattering as the cold rushed in, I

made my way to the still glowing embers of the campfire and endeavored to blow them into a flame. The agony of body was too great, however, and so, with a not very gentle kick I awoke the Indian and soon we had a roaring fire. At half past one in the morning we harnessed the dogs and started on our journey. The Aurora Borealis illuminated the heavens, lighting the starry host as they coldly gazed down upon us. All nature was wrapped in a cold shroud of mystery as our strange cavalcade followed the faint trail down Lake Winnipeg.

At the Spider Islands my driver left me and a trader by the name of Donald Flett volunteered to take me the remainder of the distance to Norway House. With his very fast team of four beautiful black dogs and a pure white leader we reached his home at the foot of Lake Winnipeg, a distance of twenty miles, in a little over two hours, and here I stopped to rest.

And, oh, the glory of nature at this point! The little log cabin was built upon a point overlooking a large lake, dotted with forest-clad islands, and in the cold, sparkling sunlight, every object in sight took on new beauty. For a day or two I was royally entertained at the home of this trader. His wife, a Cree Indian woman, prepared the most toothsome delicacies to tempt the appetite, and never shall I forget the kindness of this trader and his wife. On Sunday morning Mr. Flett harnessed his dogs to a cariole, a sled with parchment sides and back, and covered with fur robes, I made my first luxurious cariole trip. The trail led through beautiful ever-green groves, dotted with silver birch trees, and I

greatly enjoyed that ride of twenty miles in two and one quarter hours, the trader running the entire distance. When within six miles of Norway House I bade farewell to my kind host, and leaving my baggage with an Indian, I finished the distance on foot.

Upon arrival at the mission, in spite of my way-worn and battered appearance, I received a very cordial welcome from Rev. Mr. Lousley, the Principal of the Indian Boarding School, and his wife. I here met Miss Lousley, teacher of the Reservation day school; Mr. Joblin, teacher in the Boarding School; Rev. Mr. Nelson, missionary in charge of Norway House, and his three daughters; also Miss Yeomans, matron of the Boarding School; and Miss Riley, the seamstress. All were enthusiastic in their work, and the school was reported to be in a prosperous condition.

The hardships of this trip were followed by a period of severe illness, and I was confined to the bed for a number of days, receiving kind care from all connected with the mission and school. When recovered sufficiently to continue my journey, two Indians and a cariole were provided, and in weakness, I was helped in and out of the cariole during the entire trip. The second day I reached Cross Lake and was warmly welcomed by the Indian missionary, the Rev. Edward Paupanekis, and his family. After a further illness of more than a week I was at last able to begin my duties as school teacher, establishing my headquarters at the home of Brother Paupanekis, and starting at once to learn the language and customs of the country.

During my stay at Cross Lake, I received many

courtesies from the missionary, and from Mr. McIvor, the trader. Mr. McIvor had a family of several bright children, and his two oldest boys assisted me greatly in my schoolwork, as they both were able and willing to interpret for me. Out of school we snared rabbits, and trapped muskrats, and enjoyed other sports together. Often I made my home with the trader and his family and I shall always remember the good things to eat which Mrs. McIvor prepared.

In the North the days in summer are long. In May the day dawned at about two o'clock in the morning, and delayed its lingering beams until about ten o'clock at night; so these early mornings and late evenings were devoted largely to hunting, fishing and exploring. Many rabbits, partridges, muskrats and a few ducks were secured. Sometimes I used a forty-four calibre rifle, and sometimes a shotgun.

Edward Paupanekis is an eloquent Indian orator. At first I could not understand a thing he said, excepting the names of Bible characters, but the gestures and facial expressions, as well as the tones of voice, gave me a correct idea of the subject matter, and I considered it a treat to listen to him.

My stay at Cross Lake, taking all things together, was one of the most delightful periods of my life, and will be long remembered. I trust that the friendships formed while there may never decay, but may be continued on the other side of the river, where disease and cold and suffering do not affect the body, nor trouble depress the soul.

II.

OXFORD HOUSE.

This is one of the oldest of the inland posts of the great company and dates back more than six score years. Indeed its history is identical with that of Norway House in a certain sense, for Norway House was established by officers from the forts on Hudson's Bay, and Oxford was on the route, and became a natural halting place for boat brigades and canoes in summer, and for dog-trains in winter.

The Methodist Mission was located for many years on the south side of the lake on a large bay, and the old church is still standing, roofless and tottering, a home only for the wild animal. The location was a beautiful one and commanded an extensive view, but its chief charm lay in its quiet security, reminding one of the historical land of Acadia. On the shore of a beautiful body of water, surrounded on all sides by nature's best productions, lakes, streams, hills and forests, with its water yielding myriads of whitefish of delicious flavor, and the forests close at hand furnishing the rabbit, deer, moose, feathered and fur-bearing game, what more could the native wish to complete his happiness? and yet to-day there are but two or three families located at this point, the mission has been removed for many years, and the old church has fallen into decay. An air of loneliness pervades the place and sadness the very atmosphere.



OXFORD HOUSE MISSION.



AN INDIAN'S HOME NEAR OXFORD HOUSE.

Oxford Lake is an irregular body of water about thirty miles long, and varying in width from a few hundred yards to fifteen miles or more at its broadest place. Near either end the lake narrows down, forming a deep, swiftly-flowing river for a short distance. At the eastern extremity the lake becomes very shallow with sandy bottom, and flows through a very narrow channel into another lake of considerable size, forming a high peninsula, upon which the present fort, mission and Indian village are located. The lake is dotted with islands, and the shore is broken by many beautiful bays and softly rounded capes. The water is greenish blue in color, entirely different from the muddy waters of Lake Winnipeg and the Nelson River. Oxford Lake is noted for the flavor of its whitefish. The lake trout are also of fine flavor, and even the large red-fin suckers that come in schools on the warm mud banks in early spring, are delicious to a hungry traveler. The narrows usually do not freeze in the winter owing to the weedy and muddy bottom, and to the powerful current, and here the jack-fish throng in countless numbers.

A canoe trip on beautiful Oxford Lake is not soon forgotten. A gentle breeze is blowing almost continually, the atmosphere is so remarkably clear that objects may be seen for many miles; the water is clear and splashes gently against the sides of the canoe as you paddle or sail. Can a more delightful scene be pictured? But this is only one of the moods of this changeable lake. Again it rages in blind fury; the great waves dash themselves in pieces upon the rocks, and the wind holds high revelry.

When Oxford Lake is angry, canoes are safe only when far up on the rocky shore.

The village is situated on a high bluff at the eastern end of the lake, facing the vast expanse of blue water in summer and snowy expanse of ice in winter. The cold winds from all quarters of the compass sweep down upon it and whirl the drifting snow in fierceness around it. Directly in front is Lake Oxford. To the east is a short portage, and then Back Lake, dotted with islands. To the north the swift-flowing Narrows, and to the south a narrow isthmus, and beyond a vast wilderness. Thus the village is almost surrounded by water. Here the words of the Ancient Mariner sometimes came to mind, "Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink," for in winter time the water is hidden by an icy covering of from four to eight feet in thickness, and upon this falls several feet of snow. so only by dint of much labor can water be secured.

The Hudson's Bay Company's fort is enclosed by a stockade and embraces a number of buildings, including dwelling house, store, office, storeroom, Indians' house and powder magazine; the last two being located outside of the stockade. In former times Oxford was a very important post, and many hands were employed. A large number of cattle was kept to furnish milk for the post, and many were used to haul the winter's supply of wood. The Indian population was then much greater than now; for the former glory has departed. The large barn has been pulled down, and a single cow represents the bovine greatness of the past, although a large business in furs is still carried on annually.

Each year several York boats are turned out by the Oxford boat builders. A large boat-house is situated on the bank of the lake, and from the first of March until summer the builders are at work, turning out boats for the use of God's Lake, Island Lake and Oxford House posts. From the fort a path leads southward to the Mission, passing three Indian houses, and in summer time a number of wigwams. At all times the pedestrian is harassed by vicious dogs that know well the difference between the White Man and the Indian.

The Mission buildings are situated on the bluff and are surrounded by the same grassy fields that surround the fort. A board walk leads down the steep slope to the lake. A small garden is enclosed by a picket fence, and a thin growth of trees in front relieves the boldness and barrenness of the scene. The view from the verandah commands almost the entire width of the lake for fifteen or twenty miles. From the company's fort a view for twenty or more miles may be obtained, and objects at this distance are shown quite plainly by the use of a pair of powerful field-glasses.

The Mission Station faces the west, and the Western sun flooded my room with its glory. There is nothing to compare with the beautiful sunsets of this Northern land. With its Aurora Borealis and its displays of sunlight both morning and evening it seems truly God's great out-of-door cathedral; and if as Bryant says, "The groves were God's first temples," how fitting that in flood of sunset or in flashing midnight glory, God should come to his temple while all nature worships.

Extending farther around the lake is a line of Indian houses, reinforced in summer by many wigwams. But these houses contain few of the band who claim Oxford House as their fur market. For many miles along both shores of the lake are lonely houses, occupied only in winter, and without exception situated in a picturesque place, commanding an extensive view.

The houses are of logs, hastily built, mudded inside and outside, with a huge, mud-lined fireplace and chimney on one side. These houses are usually very small, and of course contain but one room, of height sufficient to allow a full-grown person to stand erect when not near the wall. Just over the fireplace a framework of poles is placed and upon this staging articles of clothing are dried, frozen fish and game are thawed, and meat is dried for future use. The building is usually surrounded by heaps of refuse; entrails of wild animals, remains of fish, and filth of all descriptions is thrown just outside of the door. This condition of surroundings is often the cause of dangerous sickness. The houses are occupied by from four to fourteen individuals, and sometimes by more. In nearly every case several families live together, without tables or chairs or any furniture unless perhaps one may boast of a box in which he or she keeps the choicest possessions, so the floor becomes table, chair and bed. The Indian sits or lies upon the floor, eats and works on the floor, and at night rolls up in a dirty rabbit-skin robe and sleeps on the floor. No wonder that immorality and disease flourish. The wigwams are not much better, but have the advantage of a

thorough circulation of air both day and night. In winter the wigwam is built of poles closely packed together, chinked with moss, with fire in the center and central draft through the top of the wigwam. In summer all houses are deserted and light wigwams of birch bark or canvas take their place.

The Oxford House band comprises about three hundred and fifty men, women and children. Of this number eighty are members of the Methodist church and fully one hundred more attend the church services regularly. The place of woman is different from that of long ago, as the christianizing influence of the Gospel is slowly but surely working a decided change for the better, while polygamy among those bands reached by the missionaries is practically a thing of the past.

III.

TEACHING INDIAN SCHOOLS.

The education of the Indian is being looked after both by the government and the church. On all the Reserves day schools have been established, and in Non Treaty territory several different denominations are at work. The Methodist, the English and the Roman Catholic churches have missions and schools among the various tribes of Canadian Indians. In many instances the church and state work together, the church furnishing trained teachers, and the Indian department supplying school material, and providing a proper curriculum for daily use. The schools of the Lake Winnipeg region are of this type. At Norway House the Church of England maintains a school, and both Roman Catholics and the Church of England have schools at the mouth of the Saskatchewan River. These schools are on regular reserves, and are under the supervision of the Indian agents. Text books and supplies are furnished by the government, and quarterly reports are sent in by the teacher to both the Indian department and the church.

My first Indian school was on the Cross Lake Reserve, about sixty miles north of Norway House. A band of about four hundred Indians is located at this point and both Roman Catholic and Methodist churches maintain missions and schools. I taught the Methodist school, and as the two schools were

on opposite sides of the lake, they were so situated as to conflict but little, since each received the pupils living nearest. My school-house was built of logs, mudded inside and outside, and fitted with some very rickety tables and benches. When five or six pupils were seated on one of these benches deeply engaged in writing in their copy books, one would move slightly to seek a more comfortable position, and the whole bench would move, and a series of hieroglyphics would be the result.

The sides of the school room were lined with boxes of biscuits, a variety of hard-tack. Each box contains about twenty-five pounds, and I had over eighteen hundred pounds of this biscuit in the school at one time. To me it is tasteless, but, my, how the little Indians love it! The government provides that each pupil coming to school for the entire day may receive two biscuits at the noon hour; and it is a merciful provision, for the majority would receive nothing at all for dinner if biscuits were not distributed. As a means of increasing the school attendance they are also undoubtedly a success, for many come to school for their "biscuits" who would not come for the instruction. The hour for distributing these dainties is perhaps the happiest hour of the day for both teacher and pupils. The eager, expectant look upon the faces of the children is a picture worthy of the pencil of an artist. I would command them to sit erect with their hands off the desks, and then would lay two biscuits on the top of the desk in front of each pupil. Sometimes a too eager pair of hands would grasp the precious biscuits before I had granted permission, but gener-

ally all sat silently, after uttering the words, "thank you," until each had received his or her share, and at the word "stand" all stood erect for a moment, but when excused, twenty biscuits went to the mouths of twenty little Indians in a jiffy. The freedom became hilarious and even the teacher was affected at times and was inclined to shout and make merry with the little Indians.

After "biscuit time" perhaps the most interesting and enjoyable hour was the time for imparting "general knowledge" according to the program furnished us by the Indian department. For this purpose, I devoted the first and the last fifteen minutes of each session, and thus school began and ended with interest at its height. I would start briskly and rapidly ask questions—"Name the months of the year," "the days of the week," "count fifty in unison," "repeat the twenty-third Psalm," "the alphabet;" and then a two minutes drill on colors would follow, when I would rapidly pick up differently colored pieces of chalk, and point out the colored articles in the room. They soon learned the names and colors of all the articles in the room and then I would bring my pockets full of small things to use in this exercise. Sometimes I would hold an article up and ask its name, and then, before they had time to answer, would quickly substitute another article and so the slow coming answer would be wrong and would illicit a shout of laughter. When asked, "What is this thing made of?" they would generally reply, "wood," "stone" or "iron" as the case might be, but sometimes their answers came with hesitation, and I would assist

by saying, "Is it of wood?" and being thus suggested would reply at once, "Yes, wood." Upon one occasion I tapped with the pointer upon the head of a very dull boy and asked, "What is this made of, is it wood?" and they solemnly replied, "Yes, wood," but a moment after saw their mistake and cried "No, no," and burst into laughter. They could not tell me, however, of what the head was composed, and neither could their teacher, so the question was dropped.

My predecessor, Mr. Joblin, of the Norway House Boarding School, taught the children to say, "Thank you," when receiving biscuits or any other gift or favor. One day a very small boy who had recently entered the school, upon receiving his biscuits was asked, "Now what do you say?" but he could not think of the English words, and so he stood for a moment looking blankly into Mr. Joblin's face, and then gravely responded, "Amen." He knew he must say something and that was the only English word he knew, and so he said it. A wise thing truly, especially as it fitted the case exactly.

The slips and mistakes of those learning another language are truly amusing, at least to the hearer, and if the speaker is not easily offended, both parties may enjoy a hearty laugh. One of my pupils was a heavy, chunky, good-natured boy, smart in some ways, and dull in others, and afforded a vast amount of fun for the other children; yet he was never angry or put out by their laughter. This boy was reading about sheep eating grass, and to teach him to apply names to the proper objects, I sent him out to bring in some grass. He came in by and by

with some grass and exultantly handed it to me. As I took it I said, "That is good, now tell me what it is," and he replied, "mouse," and of course this answer was greeted with laughter. We had killed a mouse in the school room, and in remembering the words "mouse" and "grass" he had hopelessly confused them.

This same boy had a peculiar knack of picking up a few words of English and applying them in the most ridiculous manner. He read in one of his reading lessons, "O Lucy, see that little sheep," and soon that expression became his war-cry. When upon the playgrounds or at home, no matter whether working or playing, when least you expected it, he would cry out, "O Lucy, see dat little sheep," and soon he set it to music, and at night-time his voice would come floating across the river singing, "O Lucy, see dat littles sheep." I didn't recognize the tune, but the words were familiar, and were sung with great strength, if not skill. Somehow, I took a great liking to this dull, good-natured boy.

On dull days I would resort to other means to arouse an interest in school work. Sometimes I would perform simple feats of magic, and will never forget the open-mouthed astonishment and wonder when I caused a coin to vanish from my extended hand and then to reappear in a boy's pocket. He carefully examined his pocket for some time to see if any more coins were to be produced, and failing to find any, he looked at me for a long time in a most confused manner, and when I had carefully picked a ten cent piece from the tip of a boy's nose, and a quarter from another boy's ear, they were fairly

crazy to know how it was done. Probably the children will never understand fully how it was accomplished. These tricks were performed during the last few minutes before closing school, and thus interested the pupils and removed dullness.

Among my other duties I found that I was ex-



A WINTER WIGWAM.

pected to teach knitting, and a supply of wool yarn and knitting needles was provided by the Indian department. This was beyond my ability and, as I was already living alone in the school-house and doing my own cooking, I thought it would be better to omit the knitting for a while and perhaps later join a sewing and knitting class, and take lessons in embroidery, dish-washing, ironing, etc. and thus prepare myself more fully for teaching an In-

diap school. Somehow, knitting did not appeal to me as peculiarly a masculine employment.

At God's Lake the work of teaching a school was of a different character. No missionary or teacher had been stationed there, and parents and children were alike totally ignorant of the nature of a school. I arrived at God's Lake in early September and at once commenced work. The church was a slimsy structure, very cold, and the roof leaked so badly as to render it untenable in rainy weather. There were no desks, chairs or blackboards. A few books and slates I brought from Oxford House. A number of children were orphans. I plainly announced in the preceding Sabbath services that only children of school age, that is, from six to fourteen years, would be received, and that I did not conduct a nursery, nor did I want a wife, and therefore grown-up girls could not attend the school, for their sole object in coming was to impress the school-teacher with their charms and thus win a husband if possible.

At this new place I seized the first opportunity to impress the people with the fact that attending school was a business, serious and solemn, and that the future of the child was determined largely by his school life. As a consequence I had a regular school attendance of twenty pupils, a very unusual thing in an Indian school, and all anxious to learn, and the parents equally as anxious for their children to attend. On the day before opening school, one of the Indians came to me and said that his little girl was not quite five years old, but asked me if I would take her on trial for a day or two. I

knew the little daughter to be very bright and of more than ordinary intelligence, and so readily granted the desired permission. He then asked me if I boarded the children in the church, and if they attended night and day. A curious question, but illustrative of the ignorance of the people in regard to school and church work. A few days after this two little girls came to school, neither of whom was past the age of three years. On the following Sabbath I announced that I could not receive infants as school children, that they should stay at home to be cared for by their mothers. Consequently one was kept at home, and the other was promptly sent home and there was no further annoyance. The mothers wished to be rid of the entire family for a time, leaving her free to perform her household duties unmolested, and the school room was considered to be the proper repository for all such families. I allowed several children under school age to remain in school as they evinced considerable intelligence, and progressed even more rapidly than the older ones.

The God's Lake children did remarkably well for youngsters fresh from the wilds, with generations, nay centuries, of ignorance and superstition permeating their entire being. The confinement of the school was irksome, and their restless disposition added one more difficulty to the work of the teacher. I had no classes, but gave individual instruction entirely. Text-books were little needed, or used, but the slates were in constant requisition. No time or opportunity was afforded me during school hours to sit down for a moment. It required

my entire stock of patience, the alertness of every sense, and the assistance of a kind, loving heavenly Father to interest and instruct this primitive school.

I was deeply interested in the final outcome. It afforded a telling illustration of the effect of confinement and mental drill upon an aboriginal intellect. English hymns were rapidly learned and it afforded me great satisfaction to hear the strains of "Throw out the Life Line" and "God save the King" wafted on the night wind from many an Indian wigwam denoting the presence of school children. And later, when visiting a distant hunting camp, I heard a little girl who had been to school but a short time rapidly and correctly count up to one hundred, repeat the days of the week, the months of the year, and the alphabet, the list of colors, correctly answer my English salutation and sing two or three English Hymns. I became thoroughly convinced of the mental capabilities of the Indian even when in a wild state.

Both morning and afternoon sessions were short, about two and one-half hours each, and the interest never died for a moment. Each day I saw a definite advance, and took courage. In writing and drawing the children were especially apt, and in a short time nearly all could write from a copy better than myself. In drawing I found that they had no sense of perspective whatever, size and form counting but little to them. What matter did it if the roof of a house was drawn on the end, the chimney on the bottom, with doors and windows scattered promiscuously all over the place. Such things

were very small, indeed, to them, and of no importance. The principal thing was to have the house, the whole of it, represented on the slate somewhere. In the several different schools I found but one or two pupils that could follow me in a geometrical drawing, although I chose simple designs, and took easy steps at a time, indicating each line and curve. It was well nigh impossible to believe that the entangled maze of marks, scratches and blurs upon the slate was intended to represent the accurate design that I had drawn as a copy. But draw the sketch of a plant, a tree, or the conventionalized form of a leaf or flower, and it would be copied upon the slate with surprising accuracy. They are at home with this work. The children at Cross Lake were however, by far, the best at sketching, particularly in sketching animals. At God's Lake and at Oxford House the most ridiculous figures of animals were drawn. A little girl at Oxford House drew for the representation of a deer's head a large circle for head, an inner circle, slightly smaller, for its eye, an isosceles triangle outside of the circle for its nose, and two straight marks for horns, and she was very well satisfied with her "dear." This was a fair sample of animal sketching as done by the majority of Indian children, and is simply a promulgation of the custom of picture writing by the Indians of long ago.

As in all schools, a few forged ahead rapidly. At God's Lake one girl of twelve years or more learned so rapidly that I had every hope that she would be able to read, write and speak the English language in a year's time; but alas, how soon our

hopes decay! At the end of three months I was ordered to Oxford House for the winter, the school was abandoned indefinitely; the little children of the wilderness were left once more in their ignorance.

At Oxford House I found things entirely different. This post boasted of a resident missionary for over eighty years, and of a regular day-school for many years, and most strenuously petitioned for a continuance of the same. And yet there was no school-house, and the church, furnished with two rickety tables and one weak chair, was in sad need of repairs. I searched diligently for school supplies and found but two or three ragged books, two slates, and one small blackboard. The attendance was very irregular, some days a number being present, and other days but two or three, and it was impossible to arouse interest or enthusiasm. Drawing sometimes excited a passing interest, but it soon vanished, and the continual routine of school work became monotonous. I think that any trader or white person of experience in the country will bear me out when I say that the majority of Indian parents expect their children to learn in a few days or weeks all there is to be learned. Many of the Cree men and women learned to read and write their own language in a few days by the aid of the wonderful system of syllabics invented by the Apostle of the North, James Evans, and they expect their children to learn as rapidly in English. An epidemic of scarlet fever obliged me to close both school and church for a number of weeks, and soon afterward an outbreak of mumps in its most aggravated form

wrought havoc with the school attendance. At both Cross Lake and Oxford House I continued teaching, notwithstanding the majority of my pupils were suffering with the mumps. The school-room was a better place for them than their own filthy wigwam or cabin. Some were suffering terribly and unable to speak or eat. The swelling would burst in several places, and thus render the cases doubly dangerous in case of exposure or cold. At Cross Lake I had the mumps, presumably out of sympathy for the children, but although scarcely able to speak, I managed to continue my school work.

I often call to memory incidents of school life among the little Indians. The wit and sharpness of the Cross Lake pupils, as well as their kindness, the brightness, enthusiasm and attention of the wild children at God's Lake, and the hard routine of the Oxford school, all have their place in my memory, and not among all the days spent in the Indian school-room can I recall a single unhappy one. Some of my little pupils have already passed from earth's cold wilderness, and at Cross Lake their little forms rest 'neath the winter's snow and summer's flowers. Others have scattered Northward and Eastward and dwell afar in the forest; but when the thrilling blast from God's trumpet shall sound I expect to be present at the reunion of my Indian school children.

IV.

A TYPICAL CANOE TRIP.

While in charge of Oxford House I received an urgent request from the Indian missionary at God's Lake to come at once and officiate at his marriage ceremony. Evidently he was sorely smitten and the case was an urgent one, so without delay I made the necessary arrangements.

God's Lake is a post of the Hudson's Bay Company about eighty miles southeast of Oxford House. In the winter this distance is shortened to about forty-five miles by short cuts over portages and across frozen lakes. Being entirely off the routes of travel it is greatly isolated, and the Indians are more primitive and simple than those of other posts. The canoe route from Oxford House to God's Lake is a difficult one, made so by numerous portages, shallow rivers and large, windy lakes.

At the time of receiving this request I was busily engaged in rebuilding the church and had a number of men at work. Although near the close of May, the lakes were still covered with ice and the rivers were but lately freed from their crystal covering. Men were scarce, traveling perilous, my work on the church important, but the request of my brother was not to be put aside.

On May 25 at 11:30 in the morning I started. There were no available men and so I considered myself fortunate in securing the services of an In-

dian by the name of Albert. This man was at one time an expert boatman and guide, but by reason of broken health and old age his strength had largely become weakness, and he could neither portage a good load nor paddle with the strength of the ordinary canoeeman.

Albert possessed a very small Peterborough canoe of the racing style that had been set aside by the Hudson's Bay Company's trader when it was no longer safe, and sold it to him. As it was very low in the water it could not stand rough weather as the birch bark canoes of the God's Lake Indians. We loaded about two hundred pounds of baggage into this little boat, and started across the lake back of Oxford House in the midst of a terrible squall of wind and snow. After crossing this lake our course lay down the Trout River, a shallow stream, broken by a number of rapids and one large waterfall. Two of the Company's canoes were ahead, and by two o'clock we had crossed our first portage and caught up with them. This portaging presented unusual difficulties. Our canoe, although a small one, was water-soaked and consequently very heavy. Albert could not portage it alone, and I would not try, and so together we would carry it across the portages after first transferring our loads.

I was in the bow and was not familiar with canoeing in rapid waters, and hence had frequent narrow escapes from running on the rocks in the rapids. The day was bitterly cold, and frequent squalls of snow and sleet with high wind not only impeded our progress, but drenched us to the skin.

and so benumbed me with the cold that I could scarcely hold my paddle.

We passed Trout Falls in the midst of a heavy fall of rain and shortly after entered Knee Lake, so named from its supposed resemblance in shape to the human knee. This lake is about sixty miles long and of varying width, dotted with beautiful islands. We camped on the shore of this lake, not far from the mouth of the river, and a dreary camp it was. Everything was wet, and we had no time to dry our clothing or bedding. During the night a light fall of snow covered us with a white blanket, and we awoke early to find another stormy day had dawned. Hastily eating our breakfast we started. Our canoe leaked badly, and the first business at each stopping place was to unload and turn the canoe over to let the water run out, and then to search for new leaks, and stop them by applying the melted pitch from pine trees. The Indian's method of finding leaks was a novel one. By running his mouth along the seams and strongly sucking at suspected points he could easily locate the leak and determine its size by the amount of air he could suck through.

Our food consisted of tea, without sugar, a few pounds of coarse flour, and whatever game or fish we could kill by the way. Ducks were fairly plentiful, but were wild and hard to shoot. Rabbits were numerous and we secured several.

As we rapidly passed down the first ten miles or more of Knee Lake, during a lull in the storm, the sun came out in beauty to show in all its loveliness the scenery of the lake. But the situation soon changed, the sun became obscured by heavy.



METHODIST CHURCH AT GOD'S LAKE.



A GOD'S LAKE WEDDING PARTY.

threatening clouds, and we found ourselves cut off by a solid field of ice extending entirely across the lake. By following a narrow crack close to the shore and by finally portaging across a rotten ice floe, we reached the clear water and paddled straight down the lake to the mouth of the Wolf River. For the remainder of the day frequent storms of great fury annoyed us and at times threatened to interrupt our journey.

At about two o'clock we left the twenty miles of Knee Lake behind us and started to ascend the Wolf River. At the very outset we were cut off by troublesome rapids and were obliged to make a half-mile portage. This rapids was disturbed by large numbers of suckers forcing their way upward to the still waters above. At the head of this rapids we found a fish-weir, or trap to catch fish. This is simply a chute made of poles, and so tilted that the current runs up the slide and then drops through between the poles; not so the fish; they are carried up as far as the current goes and left on the poles, one or two cross sticks preventing their return down the slide. This is an Indian contrivance, and as the stream is dammed at this place, and the slide is the only outlet, it prevents all fish from going up the stream, and catches all the fish coming down. Large numbers of suckers, pickerel and wall-eyed pike were seen in this trap and also large numbers in the water and along the shore in a state of decomposition.

Wolf River is about nine miles long and is very narrow and very crooked, flowing through a wilderness of swamps and dry sticks. Paddling rapidly

through this river we emerged into a lake of about three or four miles in diameter, which was still covered with ice. By skirting the shore we reached the mouth of another river, the Wolverine, similar to the Wolf, draining a similar country but more crooked and, in its upper courses, so very shallow as to greatly hinder navigation, even in empty canoes.¹ Like the Wolf river, the Wolverine ends its nine or ten miles course in a stony rapids, which compelled us to portage. We camped on this portage the second night. Rabbits were plentiful here, and the rapids teeming with suckers attempting to force a passage to the river above. At this camp I made an attempt at drying my clothing and my single blanket. The nights were too short, however, and it was ten o'clock by the time we ate our supper.

We were off early in the morning and passed through the Wolverine with nothing of importance to break the monotony of the very crooked river, and at nine o'clock reached Mossy Lake, which is about ten miles in length. It was also covered with ice, and we made a wide detour.

We now reached the most difficult part of our journey, the dreaded Mossy Portage. This portage is two miles in length, and of such a boggy nature that for a considerable part of the way the men would sink to their knees in slimy mud at almost every step, and frequently to their waists. It has caused the breakdown of many a robust boatman, and during the summer of 1904 I passed three men at one time lying on this portage with ruptured lungs, bleeding from mouth and nostrils. The loads

are so heavy and footing so precarious that in many instances a fall is inevitable, and in falling with a two hundred pound load on his back, the man is seriously injured. Many strong men have been ruined for life on the famous Mossy Portage. I cannot look upon its gloomy expanse without thinking of the broken lives of these boatmen.

Albert and I upon reaching this portage, bargained with one of the Company's canoe men to portage our canoe while we carried a portion of his load, and in this way, we finally crossed the cruel swamp and ate dinner on the shore of God's Lake. The portage was much better for portaging in the previous year on account of low water. Usually for nearly two-thirds of the distance an empty canoe can be pulled through the swamps in the shallow surface water, but at this time there was not sufficient water and the canoes had to be carried.

God's Lake was solid with ice and we were obliged to follow the much indented shore through a narrow canal of shallow water. When within about eight miles of God's Lake past a large bay four or five miles in width had to be crossed. We discovered an ice crack that apparently extended clear across the bay and after much deliberation we decided to explore this crack rather than to go around, a distance of ten or fifteen miles. Accordingly we paddled down the ever-narrowing channel until within a few hundred yards of open water on the other side when the crack suddenly terminated. We looked foolish for a moment, but the Northern tripper is full of resources, and so without further hesitation we jumped onto the quaking ice,

carried our loads and canoes across and re-embarked in open water on the other side. I must confess that to me this was very nervous work. To carry a heavy load over ice that is liable to drop one into a cold, watery abyss forty feet deep, requires strong nerves and great presence of mind.

We reached God's Lake Mission in the evening at eight o'clock and were welcomed by Frederick Apetagn, the native missionary, who had been eagerly awaiting our arrival. A supper of baked or roasted whitefish following a luxurious wash in the frying pan, and I curled up in my rabbit-robe, and lay down upon the floor to sleep.

As the next day was Sunday, and as I had no interpreter, I listened to two sermons in the Cree by the Indian missionary, preached to my former congregation.

On Monday at ten o'clock the important ceremony took place. Frederick, leading his blushing bride, was followed by bridesmaid and groomsman, and the church was rapidly filled with Indians, all attired in holiday costumes of extensive variety in style, shape, color and antiquity. I read the service in English and asked the questions in Cree. Upon being pronounced husband and wife the groom gallantly kissed his bride, and his example was followed by many in the congregation. We then adjourned to the open air where several salutes were fired from a dozen old muzzle-loading guns. As I had my automatic repeating shotgun with me I was invited to assist in the saluting. I fired five shots rapidly by simply pulling the trigger, and for a moment the onlookers were astounded. After

a few minutes of wonder they expressed a desire to see me "do it again," and so I fired another five shots and this ended the saluting. I then photographed the congregation, and at the request of the newly married couple I photographed them at the door of their tent, but as they insisted upon being taken directly in front of the tent, and as the sun shone straight into the lens, the photo was of course a failure.

The Company's canoes were to return empty on Tuesday, but I was anxious to start on Monday so as to cross the Mossy Portage before they arrived. As we had a load, I feared we could not keep up with the stalwart canoemen in light canoes. But they gallantly came to the rescue and offered to help us across the portages if we would wait until Tuesday and go with them. Accordingly we waited and I spent Monday afternoon in taking photographs.

God's Lake is a large, clear body of water, fully one hundred miles in length, varying in width from fourteen to forty miles. The shores are very rocky and the winters are long and very cold. This lake remains frozen until late in June.

I was stationed at God's Lake for several months and I thoroughly enjoyed myself while there. The post and church are situated on a peninsula that lacks but little of being an island. The entire neighborhood is a network of waterways, islands, capes and peninsulas. Small game is plentiful and I have shot as many as twenty rabbits and twenty-five partridges in one day.

The Indians are of the Salteaux tribe of the Ojibway nation and speak a peculiar dialect similar

to both Cree and Ojibway. They are nomadic to a marked degree and but few make their permanent home at the post. These are generally widows and orphans. A few little log houses are scattered about, and are occupied only in the winter. The people are too restless to use houses. At times the lake shore is dotted with picturesque wigwams and



A SUMMER CAMP AT GOD'S LAKE.

perhaps within the short space of twenty-four hours not one remains, and not a single individual gives life to the dreary village of bare poles.

For two weeks in the fall I made my home with a party of trappers on Swan Lake, about twenty-five miles northeast from God's Lake in the depth of the forest. We lived in a wigwam of poles, chinked with moss. The days were spent afar in the forests in the haunts of the wild animals, for there we set

our traps and captured the game. The evenings were spent in the wigwam around the cheerful camp-fire, and while the trees were cracking with the frost and the mighty lake was booming like the noise of distant thunder, we dwelt secure within the little teepee (thirteen of us) and night and morning meekly bowed in prayer and sang hymns of praise to our Redeemer.

I reluctantly bade farewell to God's Lake, for I loved its quiet bays, its forest-clad islands and its dusky inhabitants, and my heart grew sick with longing when I thought of the souls for whom Christ died, left here in ignorance and nature's darkness.

On Tuesday morning at about three o'clock we started on our return trip, with the other canoes well in advance. The ice had drifted into the shore at one point and we were obliged to follow ice cracks well out into the lake until we reached Mossy Portage and caught up to the canoes. Portaging the canoes was very difficult work, as a high wind was blowing, and the canoes, carried in an inverted position on a man's shoulders, presented a large surface to the wind, and so could not be kept in the proper position for carrying. In spite of difficulties and heavy loads, we successfully crossed Mossy Portage by noon and ate dinner on an island in Mossy Lake.

We found nearly all the lakes now free from pack ice and were easily able to avoid the drift ice, and thus by keeping a straight course were able to reduce the former one hundred miles to about eighty-five miles in returning. We made several portages to cut off bends in the rivers, and at night

camped at the foot of the rapids on Wolf River within sight of Knee Lake.

During the night a shower of rain fell, and Wednesday dawned dull and cold. Although having slept but little we were off at three o'clock in the morning and made the twenty miles on Knee Lake by ten o'clock, stopping once to make tea. Albert and I reached the river first, but at Trout Falls the canoes forged ahead and soon left us.

We now had to ascend the rapid Trout River against a stormy head wind, and found it very difficult work. We however arrived at the lake back of Oxford House with the other canoes, and landed there, portaging our loads across to the mission about one mile distant. We made the return trip in two days easily.

During this journey I was constantly wet and cold, with a wet blanket for covering, and the wet ground for a bed. Considering this, it is no wonder that on the return trip I suffered greatly from my old enemy, the catarrh. Upon my arrival at Oxford House, I was spitting blood, my head was ringing, my hearing was affected, and I was in a dilapidated condition generally.

This canoeing amid great exposure and danger, doing your half of the paddling, portaging and camp work, is more romantic when described upon paper than when experienced amid ice floes, rapids and stormy weather.

This is only one of my canoe trips and gives but a faint idea of one of our regular methods of travel in the Northern wilderness.

V.

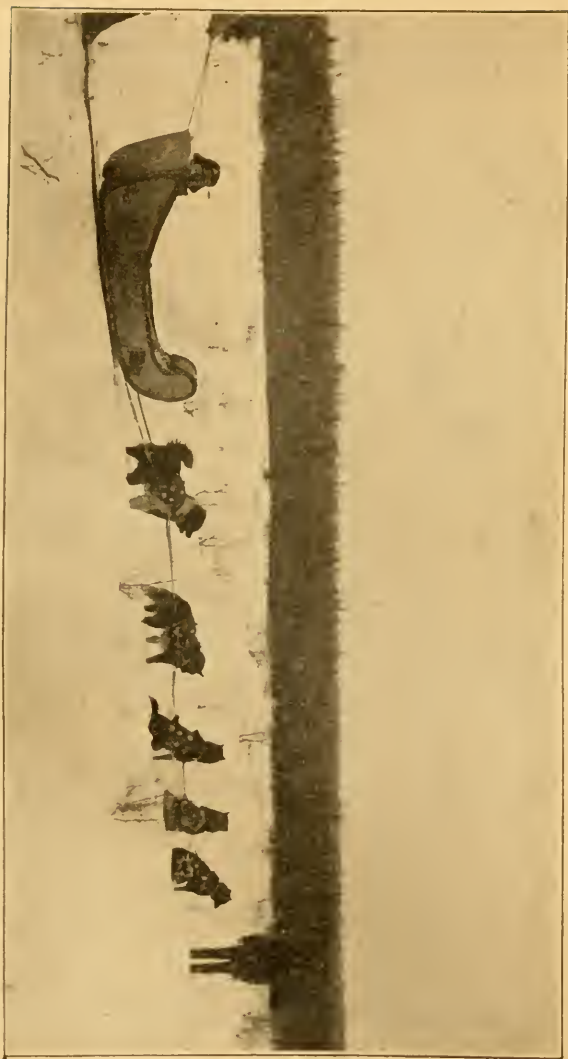
ODDS AND ENDS.

DOGS AND DOG-DRIVING.

The Indian dog has become a mongrel. The blood of a dozen different breeds flows in his veins. The best dogs are used by traders. They are long-limbed, and long-haired, usually suspicious of strangers, often vicious, but capable of enduring an untold amount of exposure, starvation and hard work.

The Eskimo dog is very closely allied to the wolf in nature, and is treacherous and vicious. An Eskimo dog that has once tasted human blood must be killed at once, for all in the neighborhood will be in danger as long as it lives. These dogs are sometimes pure white, sometimes pure black, but more often they are both black and white, or a silver gray. They are slow, steady, hard-pulling dogs, and will stand a great deal of abuse as well as hard work.

The harness is made of either moose skin, cow-hide, canvas or walrus hide; and is composed of three parts: the collar, backpad, including girth, and the traces. As the dogs are driven in tandem style, with either four or five dogs to a team, the traces of each of the rear four dogs are five and one-half feet in length; and the traces of the leader are usually six and one-half feet in length.



HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S DOG-TEAM AND CAROLE.

The ordinary flat sled is twelve feet long, sixteen or eighteen inches wide, fitted with loops on either side for lacing, and curled up at the front end in order to jump over obstructions.

A cariole is made of stiff boards and is usually wider than the freight sled. It has canvas or parchment sides and wooden back, and is a very comfortable means of conveyance for trader or missionary.

The dogs are driven by word of command, and a heavy whip is commonly employed to enforce these commands. An ordinary day's trip on the lake is from forty to sixty miles, and in the woods from twenty-five to forty miles. When traveling with a load the driver is obliged to go on foot, and I have traveled hundreds of miles in this manner.

Our dogs thrive and grow fat upon a diet of deliciously flavored whitefish. Each dog at the close of the day's work receives two fish; to feed them oftener than this would render them lazy and unfit for work. When not working one fish is sufficient; and frequently an Indian will allow his dogs to fast for days at a time.

CANOES AND CANOEING.

The birch-bark canoe is the Indian's exclusive property. He is the inventor, builder and owner. There is a great difference in bark canoes. The ones at Cross Lake and Norway House are light and graceful, built especially for rapid traveling on rivers and small lakes. They are not able to stand heavy seas and so are not used on the large lakes. Those built by the God's Lake and Oxford House Indians are larger and heavier, with ends higher out

of the water, and thus are fitted for high seas and strong winds.

Getting in and out of a canoe is a dangerous experiment for the novice, for the canoes are so frail and so buoyant that great care must be exercised in handling them. Short paddles are used and the canoe can not be beached; it must be carefully brought to the shore and emptied of its contents while still in the water.

On the long trips a load of from two hundred to a thousand pounds is taken, depending upon the size of the boat. Whenever an extra dangerous rapids or waterfall is reached, the load is taken out and carried across, and the canoe is borne on men's shoulders and reloaded on the other side. Many dangerous rapids may be safely run if experienced canoe men are employed, but it is a nerve racking experience. A very slight accident will break the frail sides or bottom, and great caution is necessary when traveling among rocks.

These canoes can be paddled through the water with great rapidity and many moose, deer and bear are overtaken in the water and slain by Indians in their birch-bark canoes.

Cedar and basswood canoes are now being used extensively by traders and missionaries as they are larger and have greater carrying capacity, a canoe holding twenty-five hundred pounds being manned by but two Indians.

YORK BOATING.

These cumbersome boats are built of heavy timbers, and when completed are of several tons' weight.



ON THE ECHINAMICHE RIVER.

with a capacity of five tons and a crew of nine Indians, eight being oarsmen and one steersman, or captain. Great oars are used to propel this heavy craft and long ropes are used to pull or "track" it up the rapids. In some places even this boat has to be portaged over a divide or past a waterfall or rapids.

When a portage is reached the men quickly tie their carrying straps to their loads, the captain loads each man with two pieces of one hundred pounds each, and he starts on a trot across the portage. He deposits his load on the far side of the portage and detaching his strap, runs rapidly back for another load. This is repeated until the entire boat load is carried over, when the York boat is carefully lowered through the rapids, and quickly reloaded. This work is done with such rapidity that to the observer it seems impossible. Sometimes during a day's travel there may be fully a dozen of these portages, and estimating the boat contents to be one hundred sacks of flour, each man would carry an average of one hundred and sixty-two sacks of flour, a distance ranging from ten rods to one mile, in addition to manning the loaded boat in still water and the empty boat in rapid water, and doing his own cooking and camp work. This is the hardest work a man can find to do and very few are able to stand it for more than five or ten seasons at the most. Sooner or later they are injured and join the army of wrecked men to be found at the trading posts.

INSECT PESTS OF THE SUMMER-TIME

Although the winter season is of long duration,

yet July is hot and disagreeable. In many localities great swarms of mosquitos, sand-flies, bush-flies, bull-dogs and other pests "fill the air, and darken heaven and curse this Northern land." At such times a gauze head-net is an absolute necessity. The air is actually darkened in places, and the sound is almost deafening.

The large bush-flies, commonly called "bull-dogs," are a dangerous enemy to domestic animals, and even the deer running wild in the forest are forced to take refuge in the water. Sometimes a deer, made crazy by the attacks of these flies, will rush madly through the camp-fire in its attempts to reach the water. Deerskin at this time of year is perforated with holes and useless as leather. The flesh is also unfit for food owing to the worry and suffering of the deer. The flies eat through the hide and deposit their eggs in the flesh; and thus render the poor animal nearly frantic with pain.

LANGUAGE AND INTERPRETERS.

The Cree language has three slightly varying forms, the Plains, or pure Cree, the Woods Cree and the Swampy Cree. The latter is the language of the Indians upon my mission field.

The Cree language is not only beautiful but symmetrical, showing a high degree of intelligence among the Indians at some time in the past. It has eleven conjugations and is agglutinative,—a language of the verb. Learning it is slow work and it requires years of patient effort to become sufficiently familiar with its forms to be able to preach a

practical sermon in Cree. In the meantime an interpreter must be employed, and good interpreters are in demand.

When Rev. Mr. Stevens was missionary at Oxford House, he wished his interpreter to render in Cree these words, "The seed that the apostles sowed took root." The interpreter rendered it thus, "I saw the apostles and they had long roots." His English for "saw" was "seed," and thus the mistake was made.

My interpreter could not interpret the hours of the day, nor numbers above eight or ten; and so "The twelve apostles" became in Cree, "The many apostles;" mistakes of this kind rendered it necessary for me to be very careful in preaching.

In translating the Scriptures there were unusual difficulties in the way. "Crown" was rendered "hat;" "chariot," "dogsled;" and other expressions were rendered in the best manner possible.

Being an American, I was called by the Indians, "Keeche mokiman," or "the long knife." This term was applied to the early American traders, and still serves as a mark to distinguish them from other nationalities. A missionary is an "ayum ehaywekemow," or praying man. A school teacher is termed "kisskenohomatowekemow." The cardinal numbers are "Payuk, neso, nesto, nayo, neahnum, nekwotwasik, taypakupt, ahyeenahmayoo, kaykat metahtut and metahtut.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

In his native state it is customary for a man to have two or more wives; and when receiving vis-

itors each wife is assigned to her proper place, the first or the favorite wife being stationed nearest the husband.

In former times the lot of women was a hard one, and abuse and hard work were her daily portion. Thanks to the glorious light of the gospel that now shines in the darkened wigwams of the Northland, polygamy is banished and woman is gradually taking her place as the help-meet—not the slave—of man. I constantly urged the women to pray in public, and so take part in the services. I finally succeeded, to the surprise of all.

Indian parents are very affectionate; and passionate grief is manifested at the death of a child. While love shows itself in many ways, yet the test of love, the very essence of affection, is evidenced by the conscientious training of the child by parents. "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth;" and this principle may be applied to parents with reference to their children. Indian parents seldom punish their children unless acting under the influence of unreasoning anger. Hence the child becomes the master and grows up without love for parents or home.

Sometimes an Indian marries for love, but more often for convenience or for fancy. Many of the young women and young men are handsome and well formed. A peculiar flirtation is carried on by the Indian belles. With shawls covering their heads and faces they await the coming of a possible victim; then partially withdrawing the shawl from the face, a smile is disclosed that "will not come off," and a pair of genuine "goo goo," or supposedly be-

witching eyes, are seen in motion; the shawl is drawn back to its place and the swain is supposed to be captured for life. I have noticed a similar method employed by our American maidens.

The staple article of food for an Indian is fish the year round. Whitefish is the best, but when whitefish cannot be obtained, pickerel, suckers and lake trout are used. This diet is varied by game of different descriptions, and moose and deer meat, and the flesh of the beaver, lynx, rabbit, muskrat, woodchuck, bear, skunk, owl, hawk, partridge, crow, gull and other birds and animals is often used to keep starvation away. I have partaken of all of the above excepting the flesh of the hawk and crow. In cases of absolute necessity the flesh of the mink, otter, martin and fisher is eaten.

Whenever possible the Indian secures a small quantity of flour, tea, bacon, tobacco and sugar from the trader, but these with the exception of tea and tobacco are considered luxuries beyond their reach.

Indian bread is made by mixing flour and water, and baking before a slow fire in a frying pan, or on a forked or crooked stick. When procurable, a little baking soda and fish oil is added.

For lights in the long winter's evenings, the Indian uses fish oil lamps, or candles, when he can get them.

Spare moments at home in the wigwam, and often when traveling, are used by the women in working beautiful embroidery on deer skin. In most of this work the button-hole stitch is used.

although often the chain stitch and other forms of embroidery may be seen among them.

HUNTING AND TRAPPING.

The Cree and Salteaux Indian is a hunter by birth and occupation. Generations of training have rendered the hunter's instinct remarkably strong within him. In certain localities near all of the posts great numbers of rabbits and partridges are killed. The rabbits are eaten and their skins are made into downy robes, the bedding of the North. Sometimes between six and seven hundred rabbit skins are used in making one robe. The partridges are of several varieties, the ruffed grouse, the pinnated grouse or prairie chicken, the spruce partridge and the ptarmigan. In fall and springtime ducks are fairly numerous, and geese and swans are occasionally seen.

Large game is becoming scarce. Many moose are killed between Oxford House and Norway House, and some few deer are shot in the vicinity of Island Lake, Cross Lake and Norway House, and occasionally one at Oxford House and God's Lake. Most of the deerskin for silk work or other use is brought from York Factory and is the hide of the cariboo or reindeer.

A moose hunt is a serious affair. The trail of a moose may be followed for days, and when night comes on no fire may be lighted. The food must be eaten in a frozen condition, and the weary hunters must lie down in their icy clothing and wear away the long hours of darkness. The moose is of very

keen scent and no smoke must sully the clear atmosphere within the radius of several miles or Mr. Moose will make tracks for another country. Frequently in the summer moose and deer are overtaken and killed in the water to which they have resorted to escape the myriads of flies and mosquitos. Mooseskin and deerskin is used for moccasins and gloves; the flesh is used for food, the sinews for thread, the bladder and airsack for dishes in which to carry fish-oil, and even the hoofs and horns are burned and then eaten. Thus nothing goes to waste.

The work of the Indian is to trap or shoot such animals as are valuable for their fur, and to properly prepare this fur for the market. So with a pack upon his back he starts off for a distant hunting ground, returning after many days, bronzed by exposure to storm, often worn to a skeleton by starvation, but usually bringing with him a pack of valuable furs. In the depths of the forests he sets his lynx snares. Along the streams he arranges his deadfalls, and on the indented shores of the lakes he leaves his fox traps.

Several varieties of the fox are obtained from this country. The red and cross foxes are the most numerous, but a few black, white and silver foxes are annually taken. Mink, muskrat, beaver, lynx, otter, ermine and martin are quite plentiful and a few fisher, wolverine, skunk and wolf skins are also brought in. The life of the trapper is a precarious one and often the catch of fur is small.

TRIPS ALONE.

During the epidemic of scarlet fever at Oxford

House, while school and church were closed to preserve quarantine regulations, I made several trips down the old Deer's Lake trail in the direction of Hudson's Bay. I went alone, dragging a small sled containing my bedding, cooking utensils, gun, traps, etc. On these journeys I became accustomed to the silence of the Northern woods. I loved to be alone with nature and with nature's God. Frequently when many miles from home and a cold, stormy night coming on, I have felt a dread creeping over me and became fearful that I might not be able to find dry wood to build a fire, or fearful lest the new snowfall might obscure the trail; for to be lost in the Northern wilderness is to meet a fate worse than death. But when the glorious beams of the morning's sun lighted lake and forest, and all nature seemed to smile with joy as it wakened into life. I cried, "Away with melancholy, for God still lives."

During the latter part of March I went to God's Lake alone, drawing a sled the entire distance of forty-five miles and return. My load weighed over one hundred and fifty pounds, and at least one-half the distance was across barren portages where the snow had been blown from the trail, leaving bare ground over which to haul my loaded sled. The trip was accomplished in four days, spending one day at God's Lake, thus making the distance of over ninety miles in three days, with my heavy load. I camped alone in the forest, taking photographs en-route. Upon my return the trader remarked how much better and healthier I looked after making this journey.

While at Norway House it became necessary for

me to go to Warren's Landing, a distance of twenty-five miles. As I could not secure an Indian guide, I harnessed my dogs and started alone in the midst of a heavy snow storm. I had been over this road but once before, and that once in a cariole, well covered with rabbit robes, and of course had not observed the landmarks along the way. I was sol-



RETURNING FROM A TRIP ALONE.

emly warned by both traders and missionaries not to make this trip alone; but men were scarce and the circumstances were pressing, so I heeded not the warnings, but started. Without difficulty I found the trail and reached Warren's Landing in a short time. The next day the storm became a howling blizzard and as I headed my dogs for Norway House in the teeth of this gale I saw strong doubt and anxiety upon the faces of those I left behind, for I

had a load of over four hundred pounds and the trails were blown full of snow. At one o'clock I shouted "Marche, Bob" to my leader and the four noble brutes tugged at their collars. For hours we faced the blizzard, the dogs pulling hard, their tongues hanging from their mouths and their eyes constantly blinking as the icy particles struck them in the face. I plied my whip continually, and shouted until I was hoarse; but of no avail; my dogs were overloaded and night was upon us with fifteen miles of dreary swamp yet before us. As we entered this region I felt as though the motto were engraved upon the dwarfed pine trees, "Leave all hope ye who enter here;" for not a sign of a road could be seen; all lay in dreary sameness before us, as the snow whirling in mid-air formed spectral shapes in the semi-darkness.

To add to the dangers my dogs began to give out and would lie down. This rendered it necessary to ply the whip even more cruelly. How hard it seemed to thus whip the poor dogs when I knew that they were doing their very best, and it was with almost tearful eyes and despairing heart that I rained blow after blow upon the quivering sides of my Eskimo sled dog. He was only ten months old, and was tired. He had yet to learn that sled dogs must pull hard, even when ready to drop with exhaustion. Time after time I whipped him up when he had fallen in the snow. It was only by dint of laborious effort that I was able to keep on my feet, for I was tired and sleepy. How inviting the freshly fallen snow appeared, and how I longed to throw myself upon its snowy bosom and rest—sleep and

dream of flowery fields and breezes laden with the scent of new mown hay. But still the snow drifted and the wind moaned among the tree tops. My dogs had ceased to cry out at the cruel lashing and the dull blows of the whip and the hoarse words of command seemed out of harmony with the weird sounds of nature.

Abandoning all hope of keeping the trail by my own knowledge of it, I depended solely upon the sagacity of my leader, a magnificent black dog of more than ordinary intelligence. At ten o'clock we slowly toiled up the hill to the mission gate, and Brother Lonsley appeared bringing a lantern. We unhitched and fed the dogs; and bidding farewell to all out of doors, we entered the mission house.

For miles that noble leader had kept the trail in the darkness and storm. And when the lights from Indian wigwams flashed from both sides of the river, and when freshly made trails led off to the right and to the left, he had kept steadily on. Mr. McTavish, the Hudson's Bay Company's factor, told me afterward that I had depended entirely too much on my leader, and that he was an exceptionally faithful dog, for even the best leaders will turn off on the first trail leading to a house, and are not to be relied upon in a region of diverging roads.

Sad to relate this was my last journey in company with my noble dogs. The day following they were taken very sick and when I returned to Oxford House I was obliged to leave them behind me.

THE PRESENT NEED.

Though the Indian may be ungrateful, full of

superstition, ignorant, filthy and immoral, yet Christ died for the ungodly and the gospel is for the Indian as well as for the white man.

The Northland needs consecrated men and women to serve as missionaries. It especially needs strong young men, physically, mentally and morally, full of faith in God. Funds are needed to carry on the work. Legislation is needed to protect the Indian from unscrupulous white men; and at present to lift him from his position as a ward of the government to the freedom of a citizen. And above all the rest, the great Northland needs the prayers of God's church in behalf of her Red Men.

MEDITATION.

While walking alone on the shore of God's Lake one day in the fall, a feeling of peculiar loneliness came upon me. I felt that God's great Northland with its tribes of Red Men had been neglected; I felt that the fields were white, ready for the harvest, and that laborers were indeed few. I was alone and could speak scarcely a word of the Cree language, with no one within sixty miles speaking the English; the long Northern winter was about to settle down upon us, and with my heart full of such thoughts, I wrote the following lines of verse. They have been kept from even my nearest friends until now, and only the possibility of their accomplishing some good, induces me to allow them to come before the public at this time.

A CRY FROM THE NORTHLAND.

To the far, far North
Where the wild storms sweep,
And the gaunt pine trees
In loneliness weep;
In fetters of ice and dungeon of snow;
In thralldom of cold where howling winds blow:—
There, there let me go,
Let me haste to that land
With the blest word of life
At my Savior's command.

For there in the chill
'Neath the cold Northern Lights,
Dwells a suffering race
Who have God-given rights:
Tho' neglected, forsaken, forgotten, well-nigh,
They cry for the gospel; then despairing, they die:
With that cry on their lips
They are laid 'neath the sod;
And their blood is on you,
Oh, ye Church of our God!

By your hearths, warm and bright,
In a God-favored land
You linger at home
Despite God's command,—
Go ye forth to all lands; in my name ye shall go;
And here ye are lingering; why is it so?
Oh! Church of our God,
Hark ye to the cry
Of the lost Indian race
As they suffer and die!

The centuries roll
And time flies apace:
The church pays scant heed
To this suffering race:—

She is building fine churches, and training her choir ;
Her preachers and singers are working for hire ;
No time for the heathen ;

 No funds to bestow,
To save poor lost sinners ;
 Say is it not so ?

But there in the chill

 'Neath the cold Northern Lights,
Dwells a suffering race

 Who have God-given rights ;—
Tho' neglected, forsaken, forgotten, well-nigh,
They cry for the gospel ; then despairing they die :
With that cry on their lips

 They are laid 'neath the sod ;
And their blood is on you.

 Oh, ye Church of our God !

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